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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# AIRGRAM

approximately 4 pages

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A-17 NO. CONFIDENTIAL HANDLING INDICATOR

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY S. Rockwell DATE 10/15/80
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

TO : Department of State

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OGEN, PFOR, AFSP, AF

FROM : Amembassy KABUL DATE: March 30, 1975

SUBJECT : Annual Policy Assessment

REF : A. State 2050; B. Kabul 1837; C. Kabul 805; D. Kabul 778; E. Kabul 1090 (21 Feb 74); F. FAM 212.4

1. Summary: At the direction of the Ambassador, the Kabul Mission has completed a policy and program assessment. The assessment exercise was carried out in two parts: (a) Mission-wide Policy Review, and (b) an agency-by-agency program review. Ref B delineates the results of the assessment with the Ambassador's conclusions. There is a broad consensus within the Mission on overall U.S. interests and policy objectives in Afghanistan for the next 12-24 month period. This airgram transmits the primary material from which Ref B was drawn.

2. Tab 1 of the enclosures is the result of a Policy Review exercise conducted at the direction of the Ambassador by a selected group of officers drawn from all elements of the Mission. The paper does not represent a Country Team review; that is expressed in Ref B. Rather this paper gives the conclusions of individuals selected (both for their perceptiveness and for a healthy leavening of iconoclasm) to participate in the Review. This group agreed with previous review groups as to the unique nature of U.S. interests in Afghanistan, but found little to quarrel with the current Country Team view of those interests. It did provide valuable criticisms of the style and content of current programs and of the overall U.S. presence here.

3. Tab 2 of the enclosures consists of "agency program papers," prepared by members of Country Team, which outline the overall goals and objectives for each agency or section of a year ago and for the coming 12-24 months, assesses progress toward these goals during the past year, and suggests how each agency hopes to measure progress towards its goals over the next year.

Enclosures: As Stated

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DRAFTED BY: DCM:RTGaffey:dp

Contents and Classification Approved by: DCM:RTCurran

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3. Tab 3 of the enclosures consists of two charts, giving budget and personnel projections for each agency for FYs 1976-1978. These projections are a "best guess" exercise of what each agency currently expects its programs to be over this period. If all of the goals laid out in the agency program papers are fully met, these projections in many cases will be too low. In some cases the figures may turn out to be too high. However, the figures represent a bench mark against which to assess later projections.

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Tab 1

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# Report of the Second Kabul Policy Review Group

This report was prepared over a period of two months, at the direction of the Deputy Chief of Mission, Mr. R. T. Curran. The Kabul Review Group consists of fifteen individuals drawn from all the agencies of the U.S. Mission in Kabul. The report was worked out through eleven meetings and considerable individual effort. With the exception of the coordinator, David McGaffey, none of the group were present at all sessions, but all have had input to the final product.

## I. Assumptions

1. The time period under consideration was the next six months to one year, except for those items noted as "long term", which means the next five to ten years.

2. For this time period, Mohammad Daoud will remain in control of the GOA.

3. Over the next year, Afghanistan's economic situation will deteriorate, especially in terms of the cost of living for the majority of the people. The U.S. and the west will be increasingly castigated for "causing" these problems.

4. A U.S. foreign aid program in Afghanistan will continue with the same sector focus, as mandated by the FAA.

5. There will be no open war with Pakistan.

6. The best route to development for Afghanistan is increased agricultural production and export.

## II. U.S. Interests

In addition to U.S. world-wide interests, the Review Group identified three specific interests particular to Afghanistan.

1. Regional Stability. It will serve U.S. interests to promote those elements of Afghan-Iranian relations which tend to increase stability, and to oppose those elements in Afghan-Pakistani relations which tend to decrease stability.

2. The economic wellbeing of the Afghan people. For purposes of 1. above, the international reputation of the U.S., and for increased international economic cooperation, it is in the interest of the U.S. to support the economic development of Afghanistan, one of the ten least developed countries in the world, and one which has the potential for development to and past the point of economic self-sufficiency.

3. Control of the production of and trafficking in illicit drugs which could become available to the U.S. market.



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III. What is the GOA perception of the Need for a U.S. Presence?

A. Sources of Perception. It is necessary first to identify the sources of this perception and define their interests. At the highest levels of the Afghan Government - the President, the Cabinet, the Central Committee - the U.S. is perceived through four contexts: in terms of the internal political maneuverings of this small elite, in international political terms, in terms of various models of economic organization, and finally in terms of the needs of the country. To the working level government officials, the most important aim is pleasing their superiors, whose motives and desires often seem obscure and capricious. Second may be a desire to appear successful, leading to a preference for working with those who offer the lease difficult choices, and a distant third, the poorly understood "needs of the country"

B. Relation to International Power Equilibrium. Afghanistan is saddled and blessed by an historical role as the balanced "buffer state". GOA foreign policy is more conditioned by the historical momentum of its role as a buffer between powerful foreign nations and its needs to maintain its "non-aligned" status than by the more transitory fluctuations in bilateral relations with the "superpowers". Thus there is the oft-stated need for a visible U.S. presence in Afghanistan as a political counter-weight to dependence on the Soviet Union. However, the traditional need for a counterweight may lessen if detente continues, and Afghanistan's membership in a "non-aligned" bloc or close relations with other Western powers or regional groupings might fill this lessened need.

C. The U.S. as a source of technological expertise

At the lower and working levels of the Afghan society, U.S. technology is considered "the best" by the majority. Thus, there is a perceived need for a U.S. technological presence in Afghanistan. At the higher levels, however, there is apparently a growing perception that U.S. technological expertise is over-priced and perhaps over-qualified for the benefits it confers on the primitive structure of Afghanistan. People such as Minister of Planning Khurram see the substitution of less expensive third-world technicians for expensive Americans as an excellent way of conserving Afghan resources with ut significantly reducing Afghan benefits. These two perceptions are in conflict. Since the negative perception is generally centered in those with the power of decision, this may militate against any large-scale private U.S. participation in GOA development projects, and may even restrict the USAID presence.

D. Evidence of Need Perception. The evidence of a perceived need for a U.S. presence is mixed. Constant reiteration of a free-floating desire for an American presence and for U.S. development assistance from the highest levels of the GOA testify to a perception of need at least in the context of international power equilibrium. On the other hand,

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there are few specific requests to back up the general statements. One fragile indication of an Afghan perception of need for U.S. expertise lies in the GOA invitations to U.S. firms to bid on GOA tenders, and to qualify for conducting oil-financed development projects. In the last year, the tenders have amounted to over $50 million, and invitations have been received for projects totalling more than 100 million. Unfortunately, no contracts have to our knowledge followed these tenders with the exception of some $20,000 worth of radio goods. This may mean that the perception of need does not overcome the price determination.

In health, the GOA has expressed appreciation for existing assistance, and requested further, while requiring the Peace Corps, the Loma Linda team, and MAP to suspend their health operations. In agriculture, the GOA has expressed a general interest, while ignoring a U.S. wheat stabilization program suggestion, largely ignoring an intergrated agro-business proposal, requiring Peace Corps volunteers in provincial agriculture programs to stop working, and putting a severe restrictions on a U.S. supported fertilizer distribution system. In education, there have been a large number of specific requests for U.S. assistance ranging from PCV teachers in schools to assistance in constructing rural schools, from textbooks to University planning, yet many of these projects apparently have to struggle against opposition or obstructionism. The AFAMEC program has had continued success in its education-scholarship programs, but was forced to curtail programs involving U.S. visitors to Afghanistan and the AFS program. Offices of the Embassy and USAID are continually asked to provide information or resources to assist offices in the GOA, and find generally excellent cooperation when they ask for information, but it is hard to consider this an evidance of a perceived need for a U.S. presence. The USIS program continues to be well received, but operates under tight constraints which appear to bear more heavily on other countries than the U.S. In sum, what the evidence points to is a generalized high-level political need for an unspecified U.S. presence, coupled with very limited specific instances of direct evidence of need for U.S. programs.



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IV. Considering II and III, What do we want to do in Afghanistan?

A. Short Term

1. Assist Afghans in their development of a definition of their interests and their needs.

2. Cooperate with the GOA to develop programs which satisfy their perceived needs. Respond with assistance to those programs which meet our legislative criteria.

3. Expand U.S. exports of goods and services to Afghanistan, and encourage increased Afghan exports to U.S. and other hard currency markets.

4. Support the UNFDAC effort to control illicit drug trafficking.

5. Use whatever diplomatic means are available to reduce tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

6. In all U.S. Mission programs, emphasise the replacement of American and foreign personnel with trained Afghans.

7. Increase personal exchanges between Americans and Afghans, e.g., renew AFS, increase IVPs, finance Afghan participation in U.S. conferences, etc., maintain Fulbright and AFAMEC progrmas, maintain PCV levels.

B. Long Term

1. Increase agricultural production

2. Help Afghanistan reduce its economic dependence on a single outside source.

3. Encourage regional cooperation.

4. Assist in increasing literacy, improving health, and population planning, and other elements of modernization.

6. Stop the production of opium in Afghanistan.



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V. Style

It is the opinion of the Kabul Review group that sufficient personnel should belong to the U.S. Mission in Afghanistan to accomplish our goals as determined. Subject to which goals are determined, that number could be greater than present, less than present, or the same as present, without having a significant impact, as a presence, on either the reception of our suggestions in Afghanistan or on the common Afghan perception of the U.S. and Americans. However, whatever the number, the style of the U.S. presence can have a major effect on the attainment of our goals and on the image we project. There are disturbing recent tendencies toward a style which will affect our presence adversely, as well as a continuation of policies long established which the group feels could and should be corrected. There are also new policies which contribute significantly to an improvement of the style of the U.S. presence in Afghanistan.

Among the important improvements are: an increase of the importance placed on language facility in the Mission. This has been encouraged and supported by Washington, which has almost doubled the post language allotment this year, and which has promised to send out a linguist to assist in strengthening the post language program. The post now has some tapes and tape players for the use of language students. The group strongly supports this new trend, and hope that the Mission will continue to push for a further strengthening of the program. A USAID suggestion of a language laboratory, with a language staff, is well worth considering.

Among the new policies the Review Group disagrees with are the increasing pressure to house incoming Embassy people in WAFM, and the excessive emphasis on security, especially in the USAID compound. The housing policy should be designed to the maximum extent possible to avoid ghetto-ization of the American community. In a strange culture, with a difficult language, and a large U.S. presence, there are many forces tending to keep Americans to themselves. To group all Americans in one geographic area will not only reinforce this tendency, but allow Afghans to see Americans as deliberately avoiding contact with Afghans, like the Russians and, to some extent, the British. Housing should to the maximum extent possible, be dispersed throughout Kabul, even be useful to consider the new areas opposite the USIA or in Khair Khana, where rising middle class of Afghans are building their homes. As far as the security regulations are concerned, it is recognized that security is important, but its needs must be kept in perspective. Whatever the intent of the new regulations - speed bumps, car stickers, exclusion of non-Americans outside of working hours - they again contribute to a ghetto image. Since the exceptions (thrift/gift shop, people walking to the first watering point, etc.,

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make them seem obviously ineffective for security, they appear, to Afghan and other foreign eyes, to be more a gratuitous suspicion of Afghans than a response to a real security need. (E.G. - to exclude from the AID tennis court people allowed to play on the court in the Ambassador's residence appears absurd, from a security standpoint.)

The style of the American presence should be such as to encourage, to the extent possible, constant, free and purposeful contact between Americans and the Afghan community. Encouragement of language training is an obvious first step. Substitution, where possible, of bazaar teachnicians for Embassy employees - carpenters, tailors, plumbers, etc. - allows contact with a potentially influential segment of the population and helps dispell resentment about the "exclusiveness" of the Americans. Encouraging U.S. participation in Afghan activities - basketball tournaments, art exhibits, English language movies in Afghan theatres, etc., will help the Americans understand the interest of the Afghans while providing opportunities for contacts. The Embassy should be willing to use some pressure to help restore the AFS and similar exchange programs.

There will probably always be Americans who come to Afghanistan and never speak to Afghans except in connection with their jobs, who insist on maintaining an absolute American environment for their families, down to U.S. canned vegetables, and who never learn Farsi - but such people are rare. Most Americans are outgoing, and would wish to meet Afghans, but in the face of ignorance and a strange culture, find few opportunities to do so. Even a small effort by the Mission to encourage these people, and help provide opportunities, could have a large impact on the American image in Kabul.

Further, the excessive concentration of Americans in Kabul could be reduced. The Peace Corps should continue to place volunteers outside of Kabul to afford Afghan-American interchange in a rural environment. Similarly USAID could attempt to put increased numbers of its employees at dispersed job sites (after providing language training). An increased US private presence, working on various oil-financed development projects, will again be a plus if it occurs.



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VI. Relations of Resource Allocation to Goals

A. Current

B. Future

1. Embassy: Reporting - POL/ECON
Influencing Afghan actions: domestically/internationally
Drug prevention
Commercial enhancement
Protection and welfare of USCs
Exchanges

2. USIS: Exchanges
Information dissemination
Promotion of Mission Activities

3. Peace Corps: Education; teaching vs. teacher training
Health/Agriculture
Commercial Training
Professional Training

4. AFAMEC: Exchanges

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